This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 15, 2006. Claims 1 to 5, 7 to 12, 15 and 26 to 35 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 10, 15, 26 and 31 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 4, 6 to 11, 13 to 18 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Published Appln. No. 2003/0016259 (Otokita). Claims 5 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Otokita in view of U.S. Published Appln. No. 2002/0180822 (Aritomi). Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Otokita in view of U.S. Published Appln. No. 2002/0135624 (Naka). Claims 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Otokita in view of U.S. Published Appln. No. 2002/0089531 (Hirasawa). Claims 24 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Otokita in view of U.S. Published Appln. No. 2002/0176719 (Yogome). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to an image forming apparatus for receiving data from a host device and forming an image. The apparatus includes a storage unit for storing a set value; a transmitting unit for transmitting the set value, which has been stored in the storage unit, in response to a request from the host device; and an updating unit for receiving print data from the host device and then updating the set value, which has been stored in the storage unit, based upon print data received from the host device.

In contrast, Otokita discloses a printer that identifies the type of the printing medium being set to perform appropriate printing according to the type of the printing medium. According to paragraphs 0069-0070, the printer driver comprises the updated paper type recording region to which data indicative of the type of paper corresponding to the print control

data existing in the printer driver. If at least one out of the four kinds of the printer type data is stored in the printer driver, the paper type data corresponding to the stored print control data is recorded on the updated paper type recording region. By referring to this region, it is possible to know which print control data corresponding to which type of paper already exists in the printer driver.

However, Otokita fails to disclose or suggest an updating unit for receiving print data from the host device and then updating the set value, which has been stored in said storage unit, based upon print data received from the host device.

In Otokita, the updated paper type recording region is prepared in the host computer, whereas, in Claim 1, the updating unit is in the image forming apparatus such as a printer. In addition, Otokita discloses that the updated paper type recording region is updated corresponding to control data, whereas, in Claim 1, the update unit updates the set value based upon print data received from the host device. For at least these reasons, the update unit of Claim 1 is different from the updated paper type recording region of Otokita.

In light of the deficiencies of Otokita as discussed above, Applicants submit that amended independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

Amended independent Claims 10 and 15 are directed to a method and computer-readable computer program product, respectively, in accordance with the apparatrus of Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 10 and 15 are also now in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.

New Claim 26 is directed to a printing method performed by an information processing apparatus connected to a printer that records a setting based upon received print data, said method comprising: an acquiring step of acquiring a previous setting previously utilized from the printer; a comparing step of comparing a current setting of print data to be transmitted

and the previous set value acquired in said acquiring step; an alerting step of, when the previous setting is not identical with the current setting, alerting a user; and a transmitting step of, when the previous setting is identical with the current setting, transmitting print data to the printer.

New Claim 31 is directed to an information processing apparatus generally in accordance with Claim 26. A feature of the newly added claims is comparing a current setting of print data to be transmitted and a previous set value, alerting a user when the previous setting is not identical with the current setting, and transmitting print data to the printer when the previous setting is identical with the current setting.

In contrast, Otokita is seen to disclose deciding whether or not an adjustment of a gap between a print head and the medium, or an adjustment of an actuating timing of the print head upon bi-directional printing, is necessary. The notifying step notifies a message indicative of a result of the decision to a user if the adjustment id necessary. (See Otokita, paragraph 0047).

However, Otokita fails to disclose comparing the current setting of print data and the previous set value and either alerting a user or transmitting the print data based on the comparison result, as featured in Claims 26 and 31.

In light of the deficiencies of Otokita as discussed above, Applicants submit that amended independent Claims 26 and 31 are now in condition for allowance and respectfully request same.
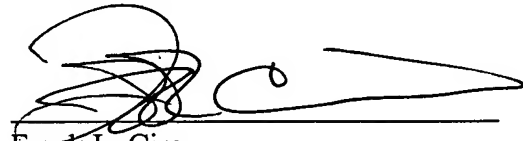
The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

On another matter, the Examiner has yet to acknowledge receipt of the priority documents filed in this application on February 23, 2004. Accordingly, acknowledgment of receipt of the priority documents is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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